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General Assembly
Tenth emergency special session
Agenda item 5
Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Sixty-eighth year

Identical letters dated 28 June 2013 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

Despite the exertion of serious efforts aimed at salvaging the two-State solution and reviving negotiations for its achievement and the resolution of all outstanding issues and the conflict as a whole, the hopes and conviction of the Palestinian people regarding the possibility for peace are waning in the light of the continued settlement campaign being carried out by Israel, the occupying Power, throughout the land of the State of Palestine and other provocative and illegal actions that signal yet again Israel's rejection of the path of peace.

Once again, we are witness to Israeli actions reconfirming the Government's preference for occupation, annexation and domination of the Palestinian people and their land and starkly highlighting its unwillingness to respect international law and to act in good faith for the sake of peace. Provocative remarks by Israeli officials and illegal actions by the Israeli occupying forces and extremist Israeli settlers continue to boldly underscore Israel's disdain for the two-State solution and its relentless attempts to destroy it.

Settlements and so-called "outposts" continue to be expanded and entrenched; military orders for confiscation of Palestinian land and demolition of homes continue to be issued; Palestinian civilians continue to be forcibly displaced, especially in the areas of Occupied East Jerusalem and the Jordan Valley; civilians continue to be arrested and detained on a daily basis; the occupying forces continue to use excessive force against Palestinian demonstrators and to cause civilian casualties; the blockade on the Gaza Strip continues to be imposed, inflicting grave socioeconomic loss and humanitarian hardship; and settlers continue to wantonly attack and terrorize Palestinians and their villages and properties, including religious sites. In addition to the exposure of plans for the construction of more than 1,000 settlement units, in the past month, hundreds of dunums of Palestinian land have been seized by the occupying forces, including more than 950 dunums in the

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Nablus area alone; another 24 structures have been demolished, displacing 55 Palestinians, including 23 children; 457 Israeli military raids were carried out in Palestinian towns and villages, causing injury to 162 Palestinians, including at least 58 children and 8 women; and 455 Palestinians were arrested.

This is Israel's answer to the calls from every continent around the globe to cease its illegal policies and practices in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and seriously cooperate with the initiative led by the Secretary of State of the United States of America, John Kerry, and his partners in the region and the international community. With typical intransigence and arrogance, Israel continues to undermine and make a mockery of international and regional positions and efforts towards the realization of the two-State solution on the basis of the pre-1967 borders and the achievement of a just, lasting and comprehensive Israeli-Palestinian peace. While failure in this regard is not an option for the rest of the international community, including for the State of Palestine, Israel insists on dragging everyone down that dangerous path.

Yet again, plans have been revealed about the expansion of illegal settlements in Occupied East Jerusalem, with an announcement recently made regarding approval for the construction of a further 69 units in the settlement built at Jabal Abu Ghneim, referred to by the occupying Power as "Har Homa", on confiscated Palestinian land. Here, we recall that Israel's decision to construct a settlement there in 1997, also under the premiership of Mr. Netanyahu, led to the convening by the General Assembly of its tenth emergency special session to address illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory. Despite the clear position taken by the Assembly at that time and in subsequent resolutions, positions previously affirmed as well by the Security Council, and despite repeated demands for Israel to halt such illegal colonization activities, the settlement persists to this day. In fact, as indicated in prior letters, Israel has exponentially increased its settlement campaign, reaching a seven-year high in the first quarter of this year alone, in violation of the relevant resolutions and in grave breach of international law, including the Fourth Geneva Convention and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

Along with such illegal actions that are further fragmenting the Palestinian land and threatening the viability of the two-State solution, Israeli officials at the highest levels continue to make provocative remarks that are further poisoning the atmosphere and stoking tensions between the sides. Just last week, following detrimental comments by the Deputy Defence Minister, Israel's Minister of Economy and major partner in Prime Minister Netanyahu's coalition Government, Naftali Bennett, stated that the idea of a Palestinian State was at a "dead end", rejected Israel's status as an occupier and, with regard to recent peace efforts, boasted to a settler council meeting that "never in the history of Israel have so many people put so much energy into something so pointless".

While the Palestinian leadership, to this moment, remains committed to the two-State solution and negotiations for achieving it and resolving all outstanding issues, we must take pause, along with the rest of the international community, and seriously assess the prospects for making it a reality under these conditions imposed by Israel, the occupying Power. Palestine has repeatedly made the necessary, difficult compromises for peace and President Mahmoud Abbas has repeatedly confirmed our commitment and readiness, but, at this most critical juncture, we are

wary of empty negotiations for the sake of negotiations and alarmed about the deteriorating situation on the ground as a result of Israel's illegal practices.

Here, we recall the recent statements by the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs before the Security Council that, "however much the parties need to reengage in negotiations as the only way to achieve the two-State solution, there must be a substantive and well-prepared framework, as well as a credible timeline, in order for the talks to have a chance of success" and that "there is also a need for a conducive environment on the ground". We thus reiterate our call upon the international community to exert the needed efforts to ensure compliance by Israel with its obligations under international law, which is essential for ensuring serious direct negotiations between the parties towards achievement of the long-standing objectives of the peace process based on the relevant United Nations resolutions, the Madrid principles, the Arab Peace Initiative and the Quartet road map. The Council in particular has a responsibility based on its duty to maintain international peace and security. Here, we refer again to the affirmation of the Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs that indeed "the international community bear[s] a great responsibility in transforming this possibility into reality". The time to uphold this solemn responsibility is long overdue.

The present letter is in follow-up to our previous 468 letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 14 June 2013 (A/ES-10/596-S/2013/353) constitute a basic record of the crimes committed by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators must be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the text of the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations